Top Secret [redacted]

ARGENTINA: Support of Bolivian Junta

Argentine leaders appear determined to prop up the military regime in Bolivia, even at the risk of jeopardizing recent improvements in relations with the US. [redacted]

President Videla has for the first time publicly expressed sympathy for the new ruling group led by General Garcia Meza and implied that Argentina would provide food aid and financial credits. These are the latest in a series of supportive actions taken by the Argentines, [redacted]

The Argentines [redacted] insist that their own national security interests were directly threatened because a left-leaning Bolivia might have become a safehaven for Argentine terrorists. There is no evidence to support such a claim but it is consistent with Argentine apprehensions of creeping Communist penetration of the Western hemisphere. [redacted]

Argentina's recognition of the new regime on 28 July was followed by the postponement of a visit to Buenos Aires by a high-ranking US official--a visit eagerly sought by the military government as a continuation of high-level bilateral meetings begun last January to promote better understanding and cooperation. [redacted]

Although President Videla may send a personal emissary to Washington to discuss the Bolivian problem, there is little reason to expect the Argentines to show flexibility. Though there may be minor differences of opinion in the Argentine government hierarchy, those officers who count believe strongly that in Bolivia at present there is no civilian alternative to a rightwing military junta. [redacted]

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Top Secret [redacted]

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